

Senator Reid: ... I want to also welcome Senator Carper. We have two other new members -- Senator Corzine who we will hear from in a minute and of course, Senator Clinton, new members on the democratic side. We welcome you.

Senator Carper, you and I came to Washington together in 1982 with Senator Boxer, who is quiet and whom we rarely hear from, but she was in our class. I always say about our service on the Foreign Affairs Committee, it was like going to school and not having to take the test. ...

Senator Smith: ... I also would like to welcome Senator Campbell, who is not here yet. There still is one possible addition to the committee on our side. Certainly, Senator Carper, Senator Corzine and Senator Clinton, welcome and we're glad to have you on the committee. ...

Senator Carper. Thank you for the warm welcome to those of who are new, and thank you, Senator Reid, for what is sure to be known as the Reid Era, the period of time when you led this committee.

It's a special privilege to be here with the First Lady and our new colleague, Senator Boxer and Senator Reid and Torricelli. We all started in this business 18 years ago and served with Senator Smith and Senator Inhofe. I see Senator Voinovich who has been my chairman in the National Governors Association, and chairman of one of the committees I serve on here.

Senate Chafee, I greatly admired and had a warm affection for your dad. It's great to be here with you and Senator Lieberman who led us through the Democratic Leadership Council.

It's a pleasure to be here today to welcome my former seatmate at the National Governor's Association whom I sat alongside for seven years. It's a pleasure to welcome you. Others have said wonderful things and I'll to that list.

Over her shoulder, is her husband and John, having applied and got through Senate confirmation a time or two myself, I have some idea what you've had to go through in terms of disclosure for the privilege of this day. That's a true test of one's affection for your wife. The fact that you're both here speaks volumes for each of you.

As governor I think the question most asked of me during my eight years when I led your neighboring State was, what's it going to be, Governor, the economy or the environment? I responded, it ought to be both. I always felt you could have a cleaner environment and a strong economy. I think we've proven that in our State. I think we've proven that in our country. I believe you've proven that to be the case in New Jersey.

You have a fellow who works for you there, Bob Shin -- he's here somewhere -- one sharp cookie and very creative, a very innovative thinker. I want to say I have no question that you'll be a superb Administrator.

The only question I have is the extent that you will have freedom to select the top people around you. That is the key. They are wonderful people in the ranks of EPA. I think there are wonderful people at the top of EPA. Some of them will leave at the end of this Administration.

One of the questions I want you to be thinking about is the kind of people you'll surround yourself with at the very top going forth.

Whether it's working to develop creative automobile emissions in New Jersey, testing standards so our region would enjoy cleaner air, fighting to protect horseshoe crabs in the Delaware Bay from overharvesting, I believe Governor Whitman has the ability to find workable solutions without a diminished resolve for a cleaner environment.

I look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Smith, our colleagues on this committee and our new Administrator to modernize but never to weaken our Nation's commitment to clean air, to clean water, to open space and a rich environmental legacy for our children.

While we have made important strides in the past three decades, we have an obligation to try to do better and I know we will. Whatever the challenge, whether it's global warming, nuclear waste, polluted coastal waters, urban sprawl, we've got to put our heads together and work hard across party lines to develop consensus.

As we begin this new century, it's time to examine our Nation's environmental successes and challenges, the laws and regulations we've put into place in three decades since the Environmental Protection Agency was created. While it's crucial that the EPA Administrator enforce existing environmental laws, you must also support and encourage innovation and cooperation as industries achieve and move beyond current requirements.

It's also important we work to fully exploit the partnerships between EPA and the States with regard to environmental management. In short, there is still plenty of work to do.

I could be accused of a certain bias in believing that a governor might be the right kind of person to administer the EPA, but viewing Governor Whitman's nomination as objectively as I can, here is what I see. I see someone who has had to learn the fine art of working within all branches, all levels and all parties of government; someone who understands the power of properly inspired corporate resources; and who has seen firsthand the intimate relations between environmental quality and the wisdom of our energy, transportation, growth management and agricultural policies.

I know her as a fellow governor and as a friend and as a good neighbor. She's an independent thinker, surrounds herself with excellent people, possesses a strong intellect and has demonstrated a propensity to think outside the box in preserving the natural resources of her State.

I believe she will bring the power of her State experience to EPA into our environmental well being. I am pleased the President-elect has nominated Governor Whitman for this post. I consider it a privilege to support her nomination and welcome her here today.

Senator Voinovich: ... I'm pleased that my longtime and good friend, Senator Carper, is going to be on this committee and looking forward to working with you, Tom. ...

Senator Bond: ... It's also a pleasure to welcome two other new members to the committee, Senator Clinton and Senator Carper whom I first got to know in the Governors Association and following several governors. ...

Senator Graham: ... I want to also extend my congratulations and best wishes to our two newest members, Senator Carper and Senator Clinton. We know that you bring a great

deal of wisdom and experience to these issues and we will look forward to benefitting by your participation. ...

Governor Whitman: ... Our water is clearer in my home state. The Delaware River is thriving again, as Senator Carper knows, and the shad population is finally coming back up, further up the river. It has increased by more than 300 percent. ...

Senator Reid. Senator Carper?

Senator Carper. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Governor Whitman, thank you for your testimony. I know your dad would be real proud of you today.

I am going to ask a series of questions. I am going to ask you to answer rather briefly, if you will. The first one is the kind of people you are going to be surrounding yourself with, as EPA Administrator. You have certainly surrounded yourself with terrific folks, back home.

The question that is on my mind, and I know it is on the minds of some others of my colleagues, is will you have the independence to surround yourself with equally good or maybe even better people, as Administrator of EPA?

Governor Whitman. The short answer is yes.

Senator Carper. Good, we are going to hold you to that; thank you.

Governor Whitman. I will tell you, just to elaborate a little bit, that this Administration has sent a very clear message, at least to me, and I am sure to the other Cabinet designees, that they expect quality people, and they expect us to find them.

Senator Carper. Good; the second question is, we wrestle with clean air problems, just as you do on the other side of the Delaware River. Among the challenges that we face are pollution put in the air and transported to our states. It comes down to us when it rains. What do you think we ought to be doing about that?

Governor Whitman. Well, as you know, right now there are certain things in place that are somewhat controversial; some regulations in place that would have an impact on that.

I believe that we need to ensure that we continue to clean our air, to see if we can find some innovative ways that will help those who have been designated as being part of the problem, and move forward to clean up their concerns in a way that allows them to continue to be economically competitive.

Again, it gets back to the concern that I have that we understand that it is not an "either/or" on the environment. We need to be forceful in our regulations. We need to be forceful in the implementation of the regulations, but we need to do it in a way that reaches out to those who are on the receiving end of those regulations, and allow them to be part of the solution. Because very often, then can come up with a lot more innovative ways than those of us sitting in Washington can device.

Senator Carper. All right, thank you.

Senator Voinovich and others have spoken to the issue of energy. My wife and I drove yesterday down to Dover for the inauguration of a new governor and lieutenant governor, and we rode in someone else's car, not driven by a state trooper.

Governor Whitman. You are still not driving?

[Laughter.]

Senator Carper. I can drive, and I rather like it.

[Laughter.]

Senator Carper. But it was a big car. It was a big SUV. It was a stretch SUV. My wife just loved it. I think probably we stopped four times for gas between Wilmington and Dover.

[Laughter.]

Senator Carper. But she thought the ride was just terrific, and there was plenty of room.

We now import over half the oil that we use in this country. Over half the oil that we use in this country, we use to power the vehicles that we drive.

Just as we were going down the road in that gas guzzler yesterday, I was mindful of other vehicles that are just being introduced and are about to be introduced to the marketplace, that are, in some cases, highway vehicles; in other cases, vehicles powered by fuel cell technology.

I am just wondering what you might have us do, in order to ensure that there is a marketplace acceptance, and not just an acceptance, of those kinds of vehicles with the new technology, cleaner burning, cleaner operating, more fuel efficient; but what can we do to provide incentives to consumers to actually buy those vehicles, if they are indeed produced?

Governor Whitman. Well, Senator, I think you touched on it when you said what kind of incentive can we provide. Because that is really where I believe we are going to have the biggest impact, educating the public and providing incentives and a desire to find more fuel efficient vehicles.

I do not believe that we should mandate from Washington that only a certain kind of car can be produced and that all people can buy. But I do believe we have a very real way and, frankly, when you look at gas prices today, that is one thing that is going to drive consumer choice. But education is also a part of it.

We entered into a contract to have clean fuel vehicles for our state police. As we looked at them, the problem is that they were electric photovoltaic cell driven cars. The problem we ran into is where they could be recharged.

It turned out that, in fact, it was not practical for the state police to use these vehicles, but it was very practical for local police. So we have turned them over to the police departments in the cities of Camden and Newark, because that is where the fuel stations were that they could receive their clean fuel and be recharged. That makes sense.

I think what we have to do is look at this as a policy that is not going to be answer. It is not going to be the same for the entire country. But we need to educate people, and we need to provide incentives and alternatives, so that they can move to more fuel efficient vehicles.

Senator Carper. I have one last final statement. In the National Governors Association, one of the best things that we had going for us was the Center for Best Practices, where we use our 50 states as laboratories to figure out what is working, and rather than reinventing the wheel, steal somebody else's good idea, and we would do that quite frequently.

Governor Whitman. Yes.

Senator Carper. I would hope that we would be taking a similar kind of attitude in our Federal agencies, whether it is EPA or HUD or any other, to say, how can we better

utilize the Federal agencies? That is not just to write rules and regulations, and that is important; but also to be a bit of a clearinghouse to share the ideas of what is working.

That having been said, I am going to submit later on, just for a response in writing if you would, your thoughts on this proposal by the Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the Delaware River to a depth of 45 feet.

Thank you very much.

Senator Reid. Senator Carper, thank you very much.

Senator Voinovich: ... Yes, and so you are going to need the team to get the job done. I agree with Governor Carper, that you ought to choose your team.

Too many times, in these Federal agencies, they tell you who is this director and so forth; and I know you are getting a lot of names. But I would insist they are going to be your people. I did that when I was Governor of Ohio. I appointed a director, and you choose your people, because they are your people. ...

Governor Whitman: ... Also, Senator Carper touched upon information. One of the things that we have done in the State of New Jersey is, we have a GIS system, Geographic Imaging System, that shows not only every brownfield in the site in the State of New Jersey, but it also shows all our water sheds. ...

Senator Voinovich: ... The other thing that I would be interested in, as Senator Carper talked about, is best practices. In Ohio, every year, when I was Governor, we honored businesses that had done the most to reduce their pollution, voluntarily. That was amazing how well some of them did, and testified that it was not only good for the environment, but good for business. There is a lot of new technology out there. ...